

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ACTION

CONFIDENTIAL/EYES ONLY

December 31, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*
SUBJECT: Possible Presidential Meeting with Cardinal Cooke
Upon His Return from Vietnam

I have received a back-channel from Ambassador Byroade in Manila (Tab A). He makes the following points:

- During a dinner on December 27 with Cardinal Cooke en route home from Vietnam, Byroade was impressed with the Cardinal's optimism in contrast to the Cardinal's pessimistic reaction after his previous visit to Vietnam.
- Byroade recommends that you see Cardinal Cooke briefly upon his return to receive a direct, personal report.

I believe there may be some benefit in having such a meeting with appropriate coverage to underline progress being made from the first-hand report of another former skeptic.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you meet with Cardinal Cooke. If you approve, I will contact Cardinal Cooke and set up a brief meeting for the first week after you return from San Clemente. A visit at San Clemente might appear too contrived.

MORI/CDF
C05138384 page 2

Approve *HK*

Disapprove _____

Attachment

(Inform Flanagan)

CONFIDENTIAL/EYES ONLY

*John Rose informed
J. Haig Jan 3.*

NSS review completed.

C O P Y

CONFIDENTIAL/EYES ONLY

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FROM: Ambassador Byroade, Manila 004

TO: The White House
Eyes Only for Dr. Kissinger

Last night at a Malacanang dinner by the Marcoses for Cardinal Cooke of New York I had a most fascinating talk with Cooke on his visit of last week to Vietnam. In essence he said that, unlike his reactions on a previous visit, he now found great hope in the situation there.

I have the feeling that Cooke was able to get at the facts there quickly with everything from the true feelings of GI's to those of Vietnamese personalities. I am also left with the feeling that it would be good indeed if Cooke could have the opportunity of a direct personal report to the President. He does not know that I am recommending this, but if you can find time in the schedule, I think it would be a very beneficial thing to get him together briefly after his return with the President.

Regards and Happy New Year.

CONFIDENTIAL/EYES ONLY

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *AK*
SUBJECT: Your Meeting with Archbishop Terence Cooke

Archbishop Cooke (addressed as Your Eminence) will call on you today to report on his recent visit to Vietnam where he met and talked with many American troops. Background on Archbishop Cooke is at Tab A.

His Report

The Archbishop found American morale high and the average soldier dedicated to doing a good job in the war. The American military men believe we are making sound progress in extending security in Vietnam and that we can get a viable solution with the proper patience and resolution. This optimistic impression of the Archbishop's contrasts with a rather skeptical and pessimistic attitude toward our prospects in Vietnam which he had prior to his visit.

Your Position

I recommend that:

1. You thank the Archbishop for undertaking the long journey to Vietnam to help the morale of our men and to demonstrate the continuing support of the majority of Americans for our men.
2. That you reiterate your determination to preserve in Vietnam until you obtain an honorable solution of which all Americans can be proud.
3. While you hope that a change in the attitude of the other side will make a negotiated solution possible and hasten the end of the fighting, you are encouraged by the good progress being made through the Vietnamization program in strengthening the

-2-

self-defense capability of the South Vietnamese. This should permit a continuing reduction of the American military commitment regardless of the enemy attitude at Paris.

4. You may wish to ask for the Archbishop's impressions on the over-all progress the allied side is making in Vietnam, particularly any impressions he gained of social and cultural progress under GVN programs designed to improve the welfare of the people.

ARCHBISHOP TERENCE J. COOKE

Born March 1, 1921 in New York City, ordained in 1945. In 1957 he became secretary to Cardinal Spellman, and served in that position for one year before becoming Vice Chancellor of the Archdiocese of New York in 1958. In 1965 he became Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of New York, and also was named Vicar General to the Armed Forces, replacing Cardinal Spellman in that position. He was named Cardinal in the last Vatican Consistory in 1969. As Vicar General to the Armed Forces, he has made two Christmas visits to the U. S. forces in Vietnam, in 1968 and again in his just-completed trip.